ML the existing investment in steel plants which have exhausted their current captive mines should also be a consideration.

- Existing captive mines should be renewed if they have complied with the conditions of the lease and the life of the steel plant so warrants taking into account existing and planned capacities.
- Steel making capacities already in existence on July 1, 2006, which do not have captive mines, may also be given preferential allocation of adequate iron ore reserves within the State without the need to go through the process of auction, as a one-time measure to provide a level playing field.
- Scientific and vigorous prospecting in the country should be encouraged. LAPLs and PLs for magnetite may be freely given to both stand alone and captive miners whether Indian or foreign LAPLs for hematite may be given only after strictly ensuring that GSI or another state agency has not already done the requisite exploration.
- Captive iron ore mines allotted to steel makers should use the ore from these mines for their own steel and should not sell the same either in India or abroad.

Exploration of gold in African countries by NMDC

2411. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Mineral Development Corporation is exploring gold in African countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of areas where licensing has been granted to the PSU by foreign Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (DR. AKHILESH DAS): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Presently gold exploration is being conducted in two areas in Tanzania under prospecting licences granted by the Government of Tanzania to NMDC Ltd. The details are as under:

(i) **BULYANG' OMBE Area:**

The licence No. PL 38083/2005 has been granted on 6.12.2005. The licence covers 41.11 SQ. KMs. Area in the Lgunga District Tabora Region in North-West, Tanzania.

(ii) **Siga Hills Area**

The licence No. 3807/2005 has been granted on 16.12.2005. The licence covers 21.38 SQ. KMs. Area in the Kahama District Shinyanga Region in the North West Tanzania.